2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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organize their own expeditions. Todas sometimes also joined, trading clarified butter and honey for tobacco, trinkets and cloth. Their clarified butter was much appreciated in the plains and was 'transported great distances, even as far as Bombay' (Hough, 1829, 72). The trading party would be at least twenty-strong, and sometimes hundreds went together—after carefully taking off all their valuables. This arrangement was important to the participants because of the dangers, real or imaginary, which they could expect as they passed through steep jungle tracks infested by tigers, elephants, wild buffalo, wolves, brigands and Kurumba sorcerers.

Until the 1830s certain Badagas, generally commune headmen, habitually walked once a year to the fort at Dannaika Ko:ṭe, below the eastern slopes.[13] The Nilgiri Plateau formed a part of the Dannaika Ko:ṭe *taluk* (revenue division) from Tippu Sultan's administration up to 1830. This was a convention important only for the collection of land revenue from the Badagas and Kotas. Each farmer was assessed a fixed rate by the officers, dependent on the total rather than the cultivated area he held; the rate did not decrease if some fields remained uncultivated one year. Traditions mention occasional visits by Tippu's officers to extract payment from the unwilling villagers (Metz, 1864, 119; Grigg, 1880, 312, 325; Emeneau, 1946, 255). In 1799, after Tippu was killed, the plateau passed into the hands of the East India Company by the Treaty of Seringapatam, and for over twenty years the British continued to collect Nilgiri revenues at Dannaika Ko:ṭe. Their estimates were now based not on acreage but on a farmer's wealth. Each year therefore the headmen carried their collected taxes down in coin. While at the fort they could also visit the nearby market towns of Sattiyamaṅgaḷa and Sirumuge (Metz, 1864, 5).

Very likely one of the reasons for the trading expeditions was to sell enough of the new harvest and other produce to get the coinage needed for the tax payment, although this could in part be paid with opium (Francis, 1908, 290; Price 1908, 224). Coinage was scarcely in circulation on the plateau at this time, especially since there was no market there until 1825. Coins had, however, found a ceremonial use. Ward (1821, lxxiii; cf. Rivers, 1906, 361–362) mentions gifts of a quarter or half rupee to Todas on the occasion of Badaga weddings. Rupee coins also reached the Todas, presumably from their transactions with Badagas and from the expeditions, for a number of the coins still displayed in Toda funerial ritual are East India Company silver rupees of the late-eighteenth century.

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As further evidence of the ceremonial circulation of coinage Ward (1821, lxxi) also discusses Badaga bridewealth,[14] and the payment of twenty Cantirai fanams (coins totalling nearly six rupees) to a mother when, after divorce, she gave custody of her newborn child to her former husband. To judge by later Badaga practices it is very likely that a gift of coins[15] was already an integral part of all family ceremonies. Such a gift was actually a delayed exchange and implied that a return gift was expected later when similar circumstances arose. By 1848 only the East India Company's coinage was in circulation, but a good deal of it was also hoarded by burial or made into ornaments (Ouchterlony, 1848, 72; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 72).

This system of coinage circulation was very slow and uncertain, as it depended on the occasional celebration of weddings and other family events. Coins clearly had a ritual value for Badagas and were important in this period as a symbolic link between various social units (as to some extent they still are). We have no definite evidence that coins were used for payment of fines to the headmen as early as the eighteenth century, but throughout much of the nineteenth century a regular schedule of fines was maintained in Badaga judicial practice.[16] Coinage did not define values in a local Nilgiri market but did act as a convenient and reliable means of storing credit acquired in the lowland markets where, from 1799, the British pursued a policy of fixing local grain prices by currency values.

By the start of the last century the Badagas had become 'terribly impoverished', and most were heavily in arrears with payment of land revenue. 'The rates of assessment were undoubtedly low', were based on acreage and 'varied with the appearance of the crop at harvest-time' (Grigg, 1880, 312; Francis, 1908, 268). During the first thirty years of British rule a decline in these payments set in. From 1799 to 1813 the average annual revenue from the entire plateau was Rs. 14,762, but over the next fourteen years it fell to Rs. 6,000 (Grigg, 1880, 292; Francis, 1908, 268). In 1801 it was Rs. 13,425; in 1811 it was Rs. 15,067 (Grigg, 1880, 314); in 1821 it was Rs. 9,000 (Mackworth, 1823, 123–126); and by 1830 it was down to Rs. 6,000 (Baber, 1830, 314). There were several reasons for this decline, the most general one being the meagre control over the plateau that could be exercised from Dannaika Ko:ṭe; Sullivan attributed the low revenue to lack of a proper road (Grigg, 1880, 280–281, 314). The tax-farmers who operated for some time on the

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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their Nilgiri acquisitions for further produce to take up to the hills.

According to modern Badaga informants their forebears did not use cash at the Ootacamund market during the first two decades of its existence. They exchanged the products of their own lands for the foodstuffs brought up by Chettis. In this way the Nilgiri Plateau was exporting a variety of goods to Ka:ramuḍu and its environs, especially clarified butter, onions, honey, coriander, opium and millet hay.

The initial period of barter in the bazaar passed as the town acquired a few regular shops. Later in the nineteenth century coinage came into use in the market, now open every day, and a government superintendent fixed the day's prices (Ouchterlony, 1848, 72; Price, 1908, 187). One could even borrow money there at 2 or 3% per month interest (depending on the security). Monday and Tuesday in Ootacamund, Thursday in Sirumuge, Friday in Ka:ramuḍu and Saturday in Me:ṭṭupa:ḷaya are however still called 'shandy days',[21] and it is still customary for Badagas to visit the Nilgiri towns on Monday, their weekly holiday, and to send truckloads of farm produce to Me:ṭṭupa:ḷaya or to Ka:ramuḍu each Friday. The transition to exclusive use of coinage in the market took a very long time, for as recently as 1924 Gaymard was able to remark that when they made their weekly trips to town some Badagas did not carry a purse but instead a basket or sackful of grain which they would exchange there for salt, pimentos, utensils and cloth (Gaymard, 1924, 2-3).

ITINERANT TRADERS ON THE PLATEAU

Both before and after these town bazaars were established the Badagas maintained another kind of link with the lowland economy. Chettis from villages lying directly east of the Nilgiris used to (and still do) come up onto the plateau once a month on foot for petty trading. Badagas call them Regional Chettis *(ṇa:ḍu cetti)*, in reference perhaps to the restricted range of each man's trading itinerary. Although living in a Tamil-speaking area their native tongue is Kannada. Their settlements in and near the towns of Sirumuge, Me:ṭṭupa:ḷaya and Ka:ramuḍu are concerned with petty trade, weaving and agriculture. The Chetti and his family weave cloth in their home for the Badagas; and until the advent of the Ootacamund bazaar they were the regular source for cloth

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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lxv; De La Tour, 1822, 261; Baber, 1830, 315; Harkness, 1832, 136–137; Birch, 1838, 103; 'Stocqueler,' 1845, 579; Price, 1908, 8; Sarada Raju, 1941, 107–108. On the partition of the district, see Grigg, 1880, 290–291, 303, and Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 117. See also Hockings, 1973.

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7. Botanical identifications for the species referred to in this study, here arranged alphabetically, are as follows: almonds *(Terminalia catappa)*, barley *(Hordeum hexastichon)*, betel or areca nut *(Areca catechu)*, black dammer or resin (from *Canarium strictum*), black gram *(Phaseolus mungo)*, chick pea or Bengal gram *(Cicer arietinum)*, coconut *(Cocos nucifera)*, coffee *(Coffea arabica)*, common millet *(Panicum miliaceum)*, coriander *(Coriandrum sativum)*, country bean *(Dolichos lablab)*, fenugreek *(Trigonella foenum-graecum)*, field peas *(Pisum arvense)*, finger millet *(Eleusine coracana)*, flax *(Linum mysorense)*, garlic *(Allium sativum)*, gentian *(Gentiana pedicellata)*, gourd *(Lagenaria vulgaris)*, great millet *(Andropogon sorghum)*, Italian millet *(Setaria italica)*, Italian rye *(Lolium italicum)*, lime *(Citrus aurantifolia)*, mustard *(Brassica juncea)*, oats *(Avena sativa)*, onion *(Allium cepa)*, panic-seed *(Setaria pallidifusca)*, pepper *(Piper schmidtii)*, poppy *(Papaver somniferum)*, potato *(Solanum tuberosum)*, prince's feather *(Amarantus paniculatus)*, pumpkin *(Cucurbita pepo)*, rattan cane *(Calamus spp.)*, rose-mallow *(Hibiscus esculentus)*, sandalwood *(Santalum album)*, slender millet *(Panicum miliare)*, tea *(Camellia sinensis)*, tobacco *(Nicotiana tabacum)*, turmeric *(Curcuma longa)*, and wheat *(Triticum dicoccum)*.

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8. Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 115. This area is now the playing field between the Lawley Institute and the Botanical Gardens.

9. Baikie, 1857, 25. In the mid-nineteenth century the Sundepatti and Manna:ru Passes provided a safe short-cut for smugglers between Coimbatore and Malabar; Ouchterlony, 1848, 75; Grigg, 1880, 19, 291.

10. Nicholson, 1898, 352. Note that the deity is a Vaishnavite one; its chariot-dragging festival is still held. See above, p. 145.

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366
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11. After crossing the Bhavani River in a rattan coracle covered with skins; Mackworth, 1823, 118–119; Grigg, 1880, 295. Once a market was opened in Ootacamund Ka:ramudu ceased to have much importance for Badagas; Francis, 1908, 340.

12. *dodda habba;* on the salt ceremony, see Hockings, 1968c, *passim*.

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13. This fourteenth-century fortress, now submerged by the Bhavani Dam, controlled the important Gajalatti Pass which links southern Mysore with the Coimbatore Plain; Nicholson, 1898, 425–427.

175

14. Ward erroneously calls the sum a dowry.

15. Later in quarter and one rupee denominations.

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16. In the amounts of Rs. ¼, ½, 1, 3, 6, 12, 24 and 48; but see below, p. 172.

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17. Also the case in some other districts of Madras Presidency; Buchanan, 1807, vol. II, 247; Grigg, 1880, 286, n. 1.

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18. The years 1803–1805 were a period of drought in the Nilgiris; Grigg, 1880, 279, n. 2.

19. There were as yet no Moslem traders.

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20. Cloth was not among the trade items. The Coonoor Pass was completed in 1833; Grigg, 1880, 17.

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21. Shandy means 'market', from the Tamil *cantai*.

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22. Foodstuffs were usually traded by volume rather than weight, for scales were never used in or near the Nilgiris.

175
804

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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1836; Metz, 1864, 6-7; Grigg, 1880, 456-458; Macleane, 1893, 403; Francis, 1908, 203, 441.

3. Metz, 1864, 8-9; an anna was 1/16 rupee, worth just under one U.S. cent today.

4. Grigg, 1880, 288, quoting from a report of December 1827; yet Harkness, 1832, 111, remarked that 'The poorer Burghers form the only class of labourers now to be procured on the hills . . .'

5. B.E.M.S., 1848, no. 18, 93; 1860, no. 20, 59; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 64; Grigg, 1880, 510-511; Watt, 1889, 465; Francis, 1908, 171, 178; Tanna, 1970, 17, 37. Tea was first grown here experimentally in 1835 from Chinese seeds, and coffee in 1838; Macleane, 1893, 403.

6. Baikie, 1857, 38, 92; Markham, 1862, 367; Metz, 1864, 99, 152-154; Ouchterlony, 1848, 2, 5, 28; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 71; Grigg, 1880, 465-467. The more important items in the list are identified botanically above, p. 146, n. 7.

7. Transferred back to Coimbatore District from Malabar in 1860; Grigg, 1880, 309, 322-323; Macleane, 1893, 216; Thurston, 1909, vol. I, 78-79.

8. Grigg, 1880, 316, 321. On the shortcomings of their agriculture in this period, see Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 31-36; Grigg, 1880, 480; 'Geofry', 1881, 132-135.

9. Grigg, 1880, 325. The Settlement of land holdings took place in 1864-1884; Grigg, 1880, 321-323.

10. B.E.M.S., 1858, no. 18, 93; 1860, no. 20, 59; McPherson, 1870, 15, 18, 21; Grigg, 1880, 34, 219-220. Tea-pickers were usually lowland labourers, for Badaga women were then afraid of being near jungle even when in gangs.

11. A few ploughs are still in use near the Si:gu:ru Pass; other villages preserve old ploughs to venerate at an annual ceremony; but in general ploughs went out of use fifty years ago; Ranga, 1934, 8.

12. Francis, 1908, 165-166; Ranga, 1934, 11-14. The lands are called respectively *ha:lihola, ka:duhola* and *so:lahola;* see Plate I.

13. Grigg, 1880, 13, citing Ouchterlony, 1848, 14; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1858, 14. It may be illuminating to cite an example of one administrative 'village'—Ke:ti Village—which reflects how much of the plateau land was formerly owned by Badagas. The available figures come from the 1881 land settlement records and show how 3235 hectares of this particular 'village' (actually a grouping of nearly two dozen villages) were distributed in the last years before the widespread adoption there of a cash economy:

Badaga farming lands	2,083 ha.
Badaga grazing ground	204 ha.
Toda grazing lands	51 ha.
Village sites (mainly Badaga)	90 ha.
Government forest areas	123 ha.
Anglo-Indian orphanage and school	307 ha.
Plantations (mainly British-owned)	175 ha.
Government cinchona plantation	2 ha.
Available for sale	200 ha.

(Source: Benson, 1881, 188-189)

From these data it is clear that this area, by no means an atypical one, was farmed largely by Badagas. (The 200 h.a. 'for sale' is somewhat misleading; it

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
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But no great change has come in salt-giving and the other important rituals of either the Badagas or the Todas. Indeed, only one general change is apparent in recent performances of the traditional ceremonies: they are done with a minimum of wasted time. Now that Badagas and even some Todas have become involved in the marketing economy, they have less time to spend idly, since time now means income. They tend to perform ritual acts with some haste, and they do not always feel concerned if a minor item in the ritual sequence is altogether omitted from a particular performance. Public opinion still favors as authentic a performance as possible, however, for the relationship between the continued performance of the rituals and the continuance of the social order is even today believed to be a real and crucial one.

Wallace's contention that rituals do not have an information function has, we hope, been qualified by this paper. The kind of information which a ritual such as salt-giving presents is information not available from any other source, whether mass media or traditional oral channels. Neither government nor gossip can reassure a community on the matter of its continued existence as a community; only the periodic re-enactment of roles and the reassertion of traditional values in the indigenous ceremonies of a culture can give Badagas, Todas, and other rural communities the security of knowing that their own particular way of life is both persistent and worthwhile.

NOTES

1. I am indebted to the American Institute of Indian Studies for a fellowship which enabled me to do field research there in 1962-63. The present paper has been written with the help of a grant from the Chancellor's Committee on International and Comparative Studies, University of California at Los Angeles. I am also grateful to M. N. Thesingh, a Badaga Lingayat who provided much of the material, and to John Hitchcock for his helpful criticism.

2. Terracing of slopes and the fragmentation of fields through divided inheritance have resulted, since the 1930s, in fields being too small to plough.

3. Numbering 85,463 persons in the 1961 Census.

4. During the past fifty years some hamlets have included the salt-giving ceremony in their sowing festival. This is convenient because it saves some time and expense on preparations; yet the two ceremonies remain quite distinct from one another.

5. Large groups of Badagas and Kotas used to go together to the market town of Gundlupet in southern Mysore, or to Karamadai, near Coimbatore. They carried hay, honey, opium, and clarified butter with them, and bartered these for salt, crude sugar, rice, coconut, tobacco, and trinkets.

6. Initially trade in the Ootacamund bazaar was handled through barter, but by about 1840 cash had become the general medium.

7. Called *"uppu kuk'ke,* "salt basket," this is made of cane by the Todas, stands about nine inches high (including the loop handle), and is smeared inside and out with cow dung.

8. The term *'hubbe* is used for six species of Leguminosae found at varying altitudes on the Nilgiri Hills. These are (1) the hill forest indigo; (2) the New Spain senna; (3) the tick trefoil; (4) the bell pea or Chinese pagoda tree; (5) *Dumasia villosa;* and (6) mountain downy senna.

9. Otherwise known as bastard mango or honeysweet tree.

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of visitors might, on the other hand, cause heart failure in the sick person. The headman who sends the invitation to other villages merely directs it to other headmen, and does not stipulate how many visitors are expected. The party coming from each hamlet is organized by someone there related to the dying person; usually a male. These visitors may bring milk or other gifts when they come, and have to be fed by the family of the sick person during their visit. There is an element of bidding farewell to the dying, which is often expressed by Badagas with the belief that nobody should be alone when he dies. At night-time, therefore, the lamp must remain alight and all of the villagers sit up singing songs or listening to the radio. This event is known as *no:ka:patu*, "watching the sick." It could continue for as long as several months of a terminal illness, although with a reduced number of participants after the first few nights (Mörike 1857: 60).

Badagas believe no one should die beyond the boundaries of his village. In recent times the hold of this custom has been such that one hears of patients dangerously ill in a hospital whose relatives insist on bringing them home to die, a decision which certainly kills some people who might otherwise have hope of recovery. Nevertheless one former headman said that after a discussion about whether to bring a dying woman from the hospital, he was recently able to prevail with the argument that a life is more precious than any custom, and that to bring the woman home before she had either got better or died was tantamount to murder, since the monsoon weather would surely finish her off in the hamlet.

Shortly before death occurs a 25-paise coin (1/4 rupee, but originally a small gold coin of another value) must be dipped in clarified butter and given to the dying person, who should try to swallow it. This rite of *hana benne* ("coin butter") is done even for children and those dying in hospitals, as it is thought that a person cannot get to heaven without this coin to pay for the food, drink and tolls on his journey there, and the butter will give him strength for it (Gover 1871: 66; Tignous 1911: 119). That some people choke on the coin seems very likely, and instances of a person recovering after swallowing the coin are numerous enough that today only a small minority still follow this custom. As a less acceptable alternative, the buttered coin may be inserted in the mouth after death, or else wrapped in a cloth and tied to the dying man's arm (Grigg 1880: 227; Natesa Sastri 1892: 833; Schmidt 1894: 257).